



National Provider Identifier

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N e w s l e t t e r

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act



The National Provider Identifier effective date is fast approaching!!!! Learn what you need to do to be prepared....

The Department of Health and Human Services adopted the Final Rule for the National Provider Identifier (NPI) as a standard unique identifier for health

care providers on January 23, 2004. This rule becomes effective May 23, 2005. The compliance date for the U.S. healthcare industry (except for small health plans) is May 23, 2007. After this date, the NPI must be used to identify providers in all HIPAA electronic transactions. The goal of the NPI is to simplify the administration of the health care system and enable efficient electronic transmission of health information.

Who needs to get an NPI?

On January 26, 2005, Dr. Winkenwerder signed the HIPAA National Provider Identifier (NPI) Enumeration Policy for the Military Health System (MHS) Individual Health Care Providers. This policy requires certain MHS providers to obtain an NPI, including health care providers who furnish billable healthcare services or those who may initiate and/or receive referrals. In the MHS, this affects the following types of providers: **All Privileged Health Care Providers, Some Independent Duty Medical Technicians, Independent Duty Corpsmen, and Nurses** who request referrals or at times provide billable services. For example, a nurse giving a Depo-Provera injection when the patient has not seen the physician would need to be identified in certain HIPAA transactions and therefore, would need an NPI.

Check with your Military Treatment Facility for more information regarding how this new policy affects you and how to obtain your NPI.

Why is the NPI important to me as an individual provider?

The adoption of the NPI will eliminate the need for individual health care providers to have multiple identifiers for use when conducting HIPAA electronic transactions. Unlike the Social Security Number (SSN), someone looking at the NPI by itself cannot derive any information about the provider. This simplifies the administration of healthcare for providers, payers and claims processors, while decreasing the risk of SSN's being used fraudulently.

How will compliance with the NPI requirements benefit the Military Health System?

Use of the NPI to identify health care providers in HIPAA electronic transactions will help make billing and referrals efficient resulting in time and cost savings for the Military Health System.

Where can MTF's Find More Information?

The TRICARE HIPAA Office of Electronic Standards has made several documents available online to provide additional information to providers. These materials include Fact Sheets, FAQs, and several poster designs. The posters can be sent to printers to produce larger images or simply printed to distribute or post on a bulletin board. All materials can be found at <http://www.tricare.osd.mil/hipaa/identifiers.html>.

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